

**EXCITABILITY OF THE HEART**—Chandler McC. Brooks, Ph.D., Brian F. Hoffman, M.D., E. E. Suckling, M.Sc., M.E.E., Dept. of Physiology and Pharmacology, State University of New York, College of Medicine at New York City and Oscar Orias, M.D., Instituto de Investigacion Medica Mercedes y Martin Ferreyra, Cordoba, Argentina. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1955, 373 pages, \$6.50.

This monograph on excitability of the heart is a major contribution to the field. The authors include a great deal of unpublished work in which they have thoroughly re-examined the entire problem of excitability, refractory period, velocity of conduction, and action currents in the myocardium, utilizing newer methods that they themselves have helped develop.

There are innumerable illustrations and an excellent bibliography. The book will prove of interest to physicians, pharmacologists, and physiologists interested in the cardiac arrhythmias. The authors logically develop the subject of excitability, transmembrane potentials, the production and nature of fibrillation, cardiac reactions to heat and cold, and the importance of chemical mediators and the effects of ions. Antifibrillatory agents are thoroughly discussed and the results are all summarized in a concluding chapter.

The reviewer agrees with Dr. Wiggers, who wrote the foreword, that the monograph will be considered a classic by physiologists and should appeal to all progressive physicians and surgeons.

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**FIBROCYSTIC DISEASE OF THE PANCREAS**—Report of the Eighteenth Ross-Pediatric Research Conference. Issued by Ross Laboratories (formerly M & R Laboratories), Columbus 16, Ohio. 92 pages.

Pediatrics is heavily in debt to the Ross (formerly the M & R) Laboratories of Columbus, Ohio, for supporting without any strings or advertising) a long series of first-class symposia on major topics of which the present is the eighteenth. In all of these a carefully selected group of leading authorities, mainly American, have participated as chairmen, speakers or discussants, and the printed volume has brought to the medical public concise but thorough reports on current thought and research, together with searching, expert discussion. In the present volume there were, in addition to the two chairmen, 12 speakers and 18 discussants. Related embryology is presented by Warkany, and exocrine function in fetal life by Vilee (whose conclusions were questioned in discussion). Associated cirrhosis of the liver is discussed in the next chapter by Sant' Agnese. Currently great interest is attached to the abnormalities of sweat in fibrocystic disease, both as a means of diagnosis and as a cause of certain serious complications, due to excessive losses of sodium and chloride during hot weather. The basic physiology of sweating is reviewed by Cooke on the basis of his own researches, leading to the tentative conclusion that in fibrocystic disease there is a shortage of energy for sweat production, leading to a concentration of solids in the sweat. Sant' Agnese reports his findings on the constancy of the sweating defect in patients, its clinical effects, and the methods for its detection and measurement. Schwachman discusses at length the various enzymatic and other abnormalities in the duodenal fluid and the methods of determining them. Sections on the chemistry of mucus and the histochemistry of mucus and exocrine glands show few abnormalities to have been discovered as yet.

The role of the staphylococcus is discussed by Vernon Knight, together with the appropriate selection of antibiotics. Lowe's report on metabolic studies shows that patients with the disease go into negative nitrogen balance at a higher protein intake than do normal children. The secondary clinical effects of the extensive pulmonary changes are dealt with by Bruck and by Royce: Emphysema, respiratory acidosis, and cardiac failure from cor

pulmonale. Barton Childs' final section on genetics concludes that as a rule the trait is recessive.

This is a great deal of ground to be covered in 92 pages, and it is remarkable how thoroughly it is accomplished. Anyone looking for an authoritative review of the latest work (up to October 1955) on fibrocystic disease will find the volume an excellent source.

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**THE DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT OF UROLOGICAL CASES**—Handbook—Bruce W. T. Pender, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S., Senior Surgical Registrar, St. George's Hospital, London; James O. Robinson M.A. (Cantab.) M. Chir., F.R.C.S., Senior Surgical Registrar, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London; Bailliere Tindall and Cox, London, 1955. 170 pages, \$5.00.

Pender and Robinson offer a short, practical outline on diagnosis and care of urologic patients in British clinics. Suitable for the undergraduate and the general practitioner, this book gives only the details of urologic investigation and pre and postoperative management. There is no discussion of pathology or surgical technique, which the authors consider to have been covered in more advanced texts. The various investigative devices and medications used in office urology are briefly illustrated and described. Some of the drugs and quite a few of the instruments used, such as Teals gorget and the Wheelhouse staff, are names and terms rarely heard in this country.

There are chapters on disease of the prostate, bladder, upper urinary tract and a very informative one on conditions affecting the penis and scrotum. The text is illustrated with simple composite diagrams depicting the causes and locations of the common urologic disorders.

The student interested in the care of cases as practiced by British urologists will find this book of value.

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**ATLAS OF GENERAL SURGERY**—Joseph R. Wilder, M.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery, The New York Medical College. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1955. 222 pages, 101 plates, \$13.50.

This is a very interesting book consisting of 222 pages and 101 plates illustrating the techniques of the common surgical procedures. It is well done. Opposite each illustration there is a summary of the appropriate surgical techniques employed, to the point, well written and well illustrated and will be a very valuable asset to the library of students, house officers and physicians doing ordinary surgical procedures. It is recommended as an atlas of surgical technique for those doing standard surgical procedures. Its discussion is limited entirely to the operative attack. Evaluation of different procedures is not given but the choice of procedures recommended is good.

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**THE LACRIMAL SYSTEM**—Clinical Application—Everett R. Veirs, M.D., Chief, Section of Ophthalmology, Scott and White Clinic, Temple, Texas; Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Texas, Postgraduate School of Medicine, Temple Division. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1955. 159 pages, \$7.50.

This text has 155 pages subdivided into twelve chapters. The subject matter is well and understandably written.

The subject is one often neglected in the average book on ophthalmology. This book fulfills the need of the average clinician and surgeon for definitive diagnosis and care of the lacrimal system.

The physiology is clearly discussed. The pathology is clearly outlined but the best parts of the book are the good illustrations and clearly described surgical procedures.